

Story 1234 (1988 Tape 11)

Narrator: Özlen Konu, 22

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Nasreddin Hoca on Ownership

One day while Nasreddin Hoca was walking down the street, he came to a place where a group of boys was playing. When the boys saw him, they ran to him and said, "Hoca, we want to have kavals<sup>1</sup> to play!"

Hoca answered, "Well, I am on my way to market, and I can buy some kavals for you, if you would like me to do so." However, only one of the boys gave him money with which to buy a kaval.

On the following day, the Hoca found the boys playing at the same place on the same street. When they saw him coming, they all began to cry out, "Hoca, where are our kavals?"

Nasreddin Hoca said, "There was only one kaval left at

<sup>1</sup>A kaval is a fipple flute, similar to a recorder. It is especially popular among shepherds in Turkey, some of whom carve their own. Shepherds supposedly motivate their flocks to do certain things by means of special tunes. The only evidence we have acquired personally concerns "watering tunes." When shepherds take their flocks to a water hole or fountain trough, they induce their wards to drink to their full capacity by playing a "watering tune." There are no standard "watering tunes." Each shepherd has his own tune, which he always plays when his flock is drinking. The animals thus come to associate that tune with drinking.

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that market, and so I bought it for the boy who gave me money to pay for a kaval."

When the other boys realized that they would not have any kavals to play, they began to cry. The Hoca said to them, "He who would own a kaval must first pay for it!"